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For Immediate Release

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER BRENDAN CARR
On His First Official Trip

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, August 24, 2017—During my confirmation hearing last month, I spoke about the important role that tech and telecom policies can play in creating jobs, spurring investment, and growing the economy for the benefit of all Americans. It is one of the reasons that I am focused on policies that will promote broadband deployment. Whether it is the workers that manufacture and deploy broadband infrastructure, the app economy that runs over high-speed networks, or the businesses that use these connections to reach customers around the world, I testified about the ability of broadband to harness the talents of all Americans, to create good-paying jobs, and to help drive our nation's economic growth.

I saw this first hand when I visited North Carolina this week during my first official trip as a Commissioner. The Tar Heel state has a rich history of manufacturing and high-tech jobs, and this legacy is continuing to thrive in the broadband era.

My visit started in Claremont, North Carolina—population 1,382. Claremont is home to a 588,000 square foot plant owned by CommScope that manufactures fiber optic cables and other high-speed connections and network infrastructure. I had the chance to walk the plant floor and talk with some of the highly-skilled men and women that operate the machines that braid, sheath, and assemble the cables used for everything from data centers to wireless and wireline deployments.

I also had the chance to visit two different sites where ISPs and their construction crews are working hard to deploy broadband across the state. In Charlotte, I visited with Charter's field operations team while it wired an apartment complex with high-speed broadband. As part of that visit, I toured a call center where the company is expanding its workforce and helping to bring new jobs to the area. Later, I spent time outside of Durham at a site where Frontier employees are splicing fiber and pulling cable to deploy gigabit speed broadband to new homes. These high-speed connections are helping to attract residents and businesses alike to the community.

In addition to these wireline deployments, I visited Cary, North Carolina to see the infrastructure that is helping the United States maintain its leadership in wireless. There, I spoke with the employees of American Tower and toured its Network Operations Center. I also talked with the engineers working on their distributed antenna systems and drove to one of their 195-foot monopole towers, which hosts an antenna array that is providing wireless broadband.

The work that goes into deploying this broadband infrastructure is enabling innovators and entrepreneurs in the app economy to set up shop and create additional jobs right here in the Research

Triangle. I saw this when I visited American Underground (AU), which is a thriving tech hub and startup incubator in downtown Durham. Nearly 50 percent of these startups are led by women or minorities, which is helping to promote diversity in the tech sector, and AU-based startups have already created over 1,500 jobs.

As a state, North Carolina is also focused on ways to create jobs in the tech sector. I learned about those efforts when I met with the staff of the North Carolina Department of Commerce, which is helping high school and community college students find registered apprenticeships through the NCWorks program, including those in the tech and telecom sectors.

Broadband is also helping to enhance public safety. I saw this when I toured the state-of-the-art Raleigh-Wake Emergency Communications Center. The highly-trained public servants at this 911 call center serve over 1 million people across 860 square miles by providing dispatch and centralized communications for four EMS agencies, eight law enforcement agencies, and twenty fire departments. Across the state, emergency communications providers in North Carolina are leveraging broadband and IP capabilities as they transition to Next Generation 911.

Over the past three days, I saw the hard work that goes into building, upgrading, and maintaining our nation's broadband infrastructure. But, if we adopt the right policies at the FCC, I am confident that broadband will fuel additional job creation and growth in our economy. I look forward to working with my colleagues to do just that.

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